UNITED STATES PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE
United States Patent and Trademark Office
Address: COMMISSIONER FOR PATENTS
P.O. Box 1450
Alexandria, Virginia 22313-1450
www.uspto.gov

APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
10/597,648	08/02/2006	Hideaki Kiko	AIBARA0003	4356

24203 7590 12/17/2009

GRIFFIN & SZIPL, PC
SUITE PH-1
2300 NINTH STREET, SOUTH
ARLINGTON, VA 22204

EXAMINER	
ZHAO, YU	

ART UNIT	PAPER NUMBER
2169	

MAIL DATE	DELIVERY MODE
12/17/2009	PAPER

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

The time period for reply, if any, is set in the attached communication.

Office Action Summary	Application No.	Applicant(s)	
	10/597,648	KIKO, HIDEAKI	
	Examiner	Art Unit	
	YU ZHAO	2169	

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE *3* MONTH(S) OR THIRTY (30) DAYS, WHICHEVER IS LONGER, FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

1)☒ Responsive to communication(s) filed on *22 September 2009*.

2a)☐ This action is **FINAL**. 2b)☒ This action is non-final.

3)☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

4)☒ Claim(s) *1-4,7,8 and 10-12* is/are pending in the application.

4a) Of the above claim(s) _____ is/are withdrawn from consideration.

5)☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are allowed.

6)☒ Claim(s) *1-4, 7-8 and 10-12* is/are rejected.

7)☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are objected to.

8)☐ Claim(s) _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

9)☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.

10)☐ The drawing(s) filed on _____ is/are: a)☐ accepted or b)☐ objected to by the Examiner.

Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).

Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).

11)☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

12)☒ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).

a)☒ All b)☐ Some * c)☐ None of:

1.☒ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.

2.☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.

3.☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

Attachment(s)

1) ☒ Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)
2) ☐ Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)
3) ☐ Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO/SB/08) Paper No(s)/Mail Date _____
4) ☐ Interview Summary (PTO-413) Paper No(s)/Mail Date. _____.
5) ☐ Notice of Informal Patent Application
6) ☐ Other: _____.

DETAILED ACTION

Continued Examination Under 37 CFR 1.114

1. A request for continued examination under 37 CFR 1.114, including the fee set forth in 37 CFR 1.17(e), was filed in this application after final rejection. Since this application is eligible for continued examination under 37 CFR 1.114, and the fee set forth in 37 CFR 1.17(e) has been timely paid, the finality of the previous Office action has been withdrawn pursuant to 37 CFR 1.114. Applicant's submission filed on **September 24, 2009** has been entered.

Response to Amendment

2. Acknowledgment is made of applicant's amendment filed on **September 24, 2009**.

Claims 1-4, 7-8 and 10-12 are presented for examination.

Claims 1-3 and 7-8 are amended.

Claim 9 are cancelled.

Claims 5 and 6 were cancelled.

Claims 11-12 are added.

35 USC 101 Rejection on Claim 9 is withdrawn.

Claim Objections is withdrawn in light of amendment by the applicant.

Remarks

Applicant requests that, "...Applicant respectfully requests that the Examiner check again for the copies of the certified copies of Japanese Patent Application No. 2004-025293 because Applicant believes USPTO PCT Helpdesk personnel have retrieved a copy from the International Bureau. Applicant also requests that the Examiner acknowledge receipt of the document from the International Bureau..."

Examiner has acknowledged receipt of the document from the International Bureau.

Response to Argument

3. Applicant's arguments filed in the amendment filed on **September 24, 2009**, have been fully considered but some of them are not deemed persuasive:

Applicants argue that, "The Examiner objects to claims 1, 7, 8 and 9 on the grounds that "a portion of the first virtual community" is not clear and is not supported by Applicant's original specification. Applicant disagrees. According to Applicant's original specification, at 5, lines 7-13, and as shown by Applicant's original FIG. 1, a community providing server (10) stores the data providing the entire virtual community. Furthermore, an HTML tag, referred to as a "community tag," is used so that contents of the virtual community may be mounted on a website of each user..."

The Examiner respectfully disagrees. Nowhere in the original specification which explicitly discloses "contents of the virtual community" is "a portion of virtual community" or "a portion of content of the virtual community". Applicant's original specification, at 5, lines 7-13 merely discloses "community providing server", "user terminal", "user website server" and how they are connected. Further, "...so that contents of the virtual

community may be mounted on a website of each user..." do not explicitly disclose it (e.g. contents of the virtual community) is only a portion of the virtual community, where "Contents of the virtual community" can be broadly interpreted as "the virtual community."

Applicants argue that, "Consequently, each user may have his own tag community, which shows only a portion of the whole map of the virtual community corresponding to the user's own address within the community (Applicant's original disclosure, at 10, lines 22-28, and at 14, lines 1- 15, and FIG. 7). Therefore, it would be immediately evident to a person of ordinary skill in the art that, according to Applicant's original disclosure, the "virtual tag community" pertains to a subset of the contents of the "virtual community," which has been tagged with an HTML tag (i.e., a community tag) for display by a particular website..."

The above explanation is clearly on what "a portion of the virtual community" is referring to. However, they are not included in the claim language. Examiner suggests the applicants to further define "the portion of the virtual community" by replacing "the portion of the virtual community" with "**the tag community shows a part of a whole map of the virtual community**..." in order to advance the prosecution of the instant application.

Applicants argue that, "A person of ordinary skill in the art would instantly realize that the Matsuda Publication discloses a virtual community (See, e.g., Matsuda Publication,

Figure 5, reproduced below for the Examiner's convenience). As admitted by the Examiner (Office Action, dated June 24, 2009, at 7, lines 11-16; at 12, lines 1-3), the Matsuda Publication does not teach, or suggest, (i) "a control means for issuing, for the purpose of mounting a virtual tag community on a website set up by a registered second user, a community tag that is to be inserted in HTML data constituting the website" as recited by independent claims 1 and 7, (ii) "issuing a community tag, by the community providing server, for a second user who accesses the community providing server and registers with the virtual community in order to mount a virtual tag community on a website set up by a registered third user" as recited by in dependent claim 8...The Examiner has failed to establish a prima facie case of obviousness against claims 1-4, 7, 8 and 10-12 because the combination of the Matsuda Publication, the Parry Publication, the DuVal Patent, and the Olivier Patent does not teach, or suggest, (i)

> "wherein the virtual tag community mounted on the website is only a portion of the virtual community corresponding to the address of the second registered user,"

as recited by claims 1 and 7, and (ii)

> "wherein the virtual tag community mounted on the website is only a portion of the virtual community corresponding to the address of a third registered user,

as recited by claim 8, and (iii) "the control means performs control to show a specific character that indicates the fifth user is not in a logged-in state in the virtual tag community" as recited by claim 3, and because the Examiner has not established a

legitimate reason to make the combination, and because the Examiner has not demonstrated that a person of ordinary skill in the art would have had a reasonable expectation of success of arriving at the claimed invention even if the combination was made."

The Examiner respectfully disagrees. It is not clear to the examiner what does "a portion of the virtual community" refer to (i.e. is the portion of the virtual community indicates the actual software or the data/content of the virtual community?). Therefor, with the broadest interpretation, Matsuda discloses the virtual community. And with the support of Matsuda in page 6, paragraphs [0063]-[0067], "Within the virtual space 81, a space is assigned to each of the users 71-1 through 71-6 indicating a "virtual room," and a space indicating a "town" for holding conversations (chats) between avatars just as if actually meeting a person, as related later on in FIG. 9. Avatars are assigned to each of the registered users 71-1 through 71-6 representing each of those users. The Avatars move and "chat" with avatars of other users. The "town" may, for example, be divided into particular themes according to the hobbies of the user and a plurality of such towns may be made available." which indicates user will only see a portion or part of the virtual community (i.e. only see one of many towns). Further, Parry discloses "wherein the virtual tag community mounted on the website is only a portion of the virtual community corresponding to the address of the second registered user" and "issuing a community

tag, by the community providing server, for a second user who accesses the community providing server and registers with the virtual community in order to mount a virtual tag community on a website set up by a registered third user" (Parry: page 2, paragraph [0024], paragraph [0025], "...combination of novel JavaScript technology with Uniform Resource Locator (URL) munging allows a hosted service, such as a hosted site search engine, to be easily and seamlessly integrated into a customer's Web site. In this embodiment, static JavaScript code is inserted into the customer's Web page. This code executes a second JavaScript program that passes a "munged" URL to the ASP's servers. The ASP's servers then parse the session variables that were encoded in the munged URL. Finally, the ASP's servers generate a dynamic JavaScript program that displays the hosted service (e.g., a search form) directly within the customer's Web page. As a result, the Web user is unable to discern that the services provided using this technique are hosted remotely.", page 4, paragraph [0057], "6. Customer server 320 responds to the request in step 5. Customer server 320 need only recognize the static portion of the URL and need not process the data that was munged. Customer server 320 may then respond to the request in step 5 by transmitting a Web page to user 310. The Web page may have an instruction embedded within its source code that

instructs user browser 310 to import a service resource from ASP server 330. For example, this instruction may be an HTML script tag that instructs user browser 310 to import, for example, a JavaScript source file from ASP server 330.", page 8, paragraph [0100], where "the virtual tag community" is read on "allows a hosted service..." and "embedded within in its source an instruction for user browser 310 to import a service resource from ASP", "mounted on the website" is read on "allows a hosted service, such as a hosted site search engine, to be easily and seamlessly integrated into a customer's Web site.", "address" is read on "URL" and "combination of novel JavaScript technology with Uniform Resource Locator (URL)").

Priority

4. Acknowledgment is made of applicant's claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. 119(a)-(d). Priority date of **February 2, 2004** is given.

Claim Objections

5. Claims 1-4, 7 and 8 are objected because of the following informalities:

Claim 2 recites the limitation "...the avatar acting for a fourth user in..." in line 5. However, the examiner could not find a third user.

Appropriate correction/clarification is required.

6. Claim 8 recites the limitations "a registered third user" in line 6 and "a third registered user". Are these two terms referring to the same thing?

Appropriate correction/clarification is required.

7. Claims 1-4, 7 and 8 recite "a portion of the first virtual community" it is not clear and broad (e.g. what or which portion?).

Appropriate clarification is required.

8. Claims 1, 7 and 8 recite "a control means for issuing, for the purpose of mounting a virtual tag community on a website set up by a registered second user, a community tag that is to be inserted in HTML data constituting the website, wherein the virtual tag community mounted on the website is only a portion of the virtual community corresponding to the address of the second registered user." which is missing the connection or relationship to the rest of the limitations (i.e. Unless, the first user is accessing the virtual community through the website of the registered second user, otherwise, what does the registered second user have to do with the first user? Or, what does the first user have to do with the registered second user?).

Appropriate clarification is required.

9. Claims 1-4, 7 and 8 have used the terms "a first user" (Claims 1, 7, 8), "a registered second user" (Claims 1, 7, 8), "a third registered user" (Claims 4, 8), "a fourth user" (Claim 2) and "a fifth user" (Claim 3). It is unclear to the examiner, what is the different between "a user" and "a registered user"? What does "registered user" refer to? (i.e. does "registered user" refer to the registered user of the website (i.e. user's homepage) or the registered user of the virtual community?)

Further, examiner can not find the support for “a third user”, "a forth user" and “a fifth user" in the Specification.

Appropriate clarification is required.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 112

The following is a quotation of the second paragraph of 35 U.S.C. 112:

> The specification shall conclude with one or more claims particularly pointing out and distinctly claiming the subject matter which the applicant regards as his invention.

10. Claim 4 recites the limitation "the third user" in Claim 4, lines 3-4. There is insufficient antecedent basis for this limitation in the claim.

11. Claims 11-12 recite the limitation "A virtual community system…". There is insufficient antecedent basis for this limitation in the claim.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103

The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

> (a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negatived by the manner in which the invention was made.

12. **Claims 1, 2 and 7-10 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Matsuda (U.S. Pub. No.: US 2002/0054094 A1), in view of Parry (U.S. Pub. No.: U.S. 2002/0178186).**

For claim 1, Matsuda discloses a community providing server providing a virtual community for a first user who has a user terminal connected to the server via a network, the server comprising:

a user management information database for storing information concerning registered users who are registered with the virtual community, wherein the stored information includes addresses of the registered users in the virtual community (Matsuda: page 5, paragraph [0048], "Information on the user registered in the service is stored in the user information DB 21. During registration in the service, the attributes of each user, such as the user ID, full name, age, **address, electronic mail address**, types of hobbies, keywords relating to that user (such as hobbies) are first of all stored in the user information DB 21…");

a contents database for storing contents data constituting the virtual community (Matsuda: page 4, paragraph [0042], page 5, paragraph [0049], "Information on the community is stored in the community information DB 22. Information such as the community name, object of the community's interest…", page 6, paragraph [0059], "The ROM 54 stores programs (for example, the programs described later

on, to run processing for providing services such as electronic bulletin board [BBS] and mailing lists provided to the community members, programs to perform new user registration processing, new community registration processing...").

wherein the virtual tag community is only a portion of the virtual community (Matsuda: page 6, paragraphs [0063]-[0067], "Within the virtual space 81, a space is assigned to each of the users 71-1 through 71-6 indicating a "virtual room," and a space indicating a "town" for holding conversations (chats) between avatars just as if actually meeting a person, as related later on in FIG. 9. Avatars are assigned to each of the registered users 71-1 through 71-6 representing each of those users. The Avatars move and "chat" with avatars of other users. The "town" may, for example, be divided into particular themes according to the hobbies of the user and a plurality of such towns may be made available.").

However, Matsuda does not explicitly disclose a control means for issuing, for the purpose of mounting a virtual tag community on a website set up by a registered second user, a community tag that is to be inserted in HTML data constituting the website.

Parry discloses a control means for issuing, for the purpose of mounting a virtual tag community on a website set up by a registered second user, a

community tag that is to be inserted in HTML data constituting the website, wherein the virtual tag community mounted on the website is only a portion of the virtual community corresponding to the address of the second registered user (Parry: page 2, paragraph [0024], "Customers may incorporate site search capability into any Web page by simply copying and pasting HyperText Markup Language (HTML) code into the Web page.", paragraph [0025], "...combination of novel JavaScript technology with Uniform Resource Locator (URL) munging allows a hosted service, such as a hosted site search engine, to be easily and seamlessly integrated into a customer's Web site. In this embodiment, static JavaScript code is inserted into the customer's Web page. This code executes a second JavaScript program that passes a "munged" URL to the ASP's servers. The ASP's servers then parse the session variables that were encoded in the munged URL. Finally, the ASP's servers generate a dynamic JavaScript program that displays the hosted service (e.g., a search form) directly within the customer's Web page. As a result, the Web user is unable to discern that the services provided using this technique are hosted remotely.", page 4, paragraph [0057], "6. Customer server 320 responds to the request in step 5. Customer server 320 need only recognize the static portion of the URL and need not process the data that was munged. Customer server 320 may

then respond to the request in step 5 by transmitting a Web page to user 310. The Web page may have an instruction embedded within its source code that instructs user browser 310 to import a service resource from ASP server 330. For example, this instruction may be an HTML script tag that instructs user browser 310 to import, for example, a JavaScript source file from ASP server 330.", page 8, paragraph [0100]).

It would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to improve upon "Information processing apparatus, information processing method, service providing system, and computer program thereof" as taught by Matsuda by implementing "Remote URL munging business method" as taught by Parry, because it would provide Matsuda's method with the enhanced capability of "...a significant advantage over other known installation procedures, some of which require up to sixteen hours." (Parry: page 2, paragraph [0024]) and "...allows a hosted service, such as a hosted site search engine, to be easily and seamlessly integrated into a customer's Web site." (Parry: page 2, paragraph [0025]).

For claim 2, Matsuda and Parry disclose the modified community providing server as defined in claim 1, wherein,

the user management information database stores information concerning an avatar that is a character acting for each user in the virtual tag community

(Matsuda: page 1, paragraph [0003], page 4, paragraph [0044], page 6, paragraph [0063]), **and**

the control means performs control to show the avatar acting for a fourth user in the virtual tag community (Matsuda: page 4, paragraph [0044]) **who is accessing the website mounting the virtual tag community of the first virtual community** (Parry: page 2, paragraph [0025], paragraph [0032], page 8, paragraph [0100]).

Claim 7 is rejected as substantially similar as claim 1, for the similar reasons.

For claim 8, Matsuda discloses a virtual community providing method for providing a first virtual community for a first user who has a user terminal connected to a community providing server via a network, the method comprising the steps of:

(a) issuing a community tag, by the community providing server, for a second user who accesses the community providing server and registers with the virtual community (Matsuda: page 4, paragraphs [0042]-[0043], page 5, paragraph [0048]) **, wherein the virtual tag community mounted on the website is only a portion of the first virtual community corresponding to the address of a third user who owns the website mounting the virtual tag community** (Matsuda: page 6, paragraphs [0063]-[0067])**;**

(b) sending data of contents of the first virtual community, by the community providing server, to the user terminal after analyzing the virtual community tag (Matsuda: page 4, paragraphs [0042]-[0043], [0047]).

However, Matsuda does not explicitly wherein the virtual tag community mounted on the website, the first virtual community corresponding to the address of a third user who owns the website mounting the virtual tag community.

Parry discloses wherein the virtual tag community mounted on the website is only a portion of the first virtual community corresponding to the address of a third user who owns the website mounting the virtual tag community (Parry: page 2, paragraph [0024], "Customers may incorporate site search capability into any Web page by simply copying and pasting HyperText Markup Language (HTML) code into the Web page.", paragraph [0025], "...combination of novel JavaScript technology with Uniform Resource Locator (URL) munging allows a hosted service, such as a hosted site search engine, to be easily and seamlessly integrated into a customer's Web site. In this embodiment, static JavaScript code is inserted into the customer's Web page. This code executes a second JavaScript program that passes a "munged" URL to the ASP's servers. The ASP's servers then parse the session variables that were encoded in the munged URL. Finally, the ASP's servers generate a dynamic JavaScript program that displays the hosted service (e.g., a search form) directly within the customer's Web page. As a result, the Web user is unable to discern that the services provided using this technique are hosted remotely.", page 4, paragraph [0057], "6. Customer

server 320 responds to the request in step 5. Customer server 320 need only recognize the static portion of the URL and need not process the data that was munged. Customer server 320 may then respond to the request in step 5 by transmitting a Web page to user 310. The Web page may have an instruction embedded within its source code that instructs user browser 310 to import a service resource from ASP server 330. For example, this instruction may be an HTML script tag that instructs user browser 310 to import, for example, a JavaScript source file from ASP server 330.", page 8, paragraph [0100]).

It would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to improve upon "Information processing apparatus, information processing method, service providing system, and computer program thereof" as taught by Matsuda by implementing "Remote URL munging business method" as taught by Parry, because it would provide Matsuda's method with the enhanced capability of "...a significant advantage over other known installation procedures, some of which require up to sixteen hours." (Parry: page 2, paragraph [0024]) and "...allows a hosted service, such as a hosted site search engine, to be easily and seamlessly integrated into a customer's Web site." (Parry: page 2, paragraph [0025]).

Claim 9 is rejected as substantially similar as claim 8, for the similar reasons.

Claim 10 is rejected as substantially similar as claim 2, for the similar reasons.

13. **Claim 3 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Matsuda (U.S. Pub. No.: US 2002/0054094 A1), in view of Parry (U.S. Pub. No.: U.S. 2002/0178186) as applied to claim 2 above, and further in view of Wu et al. (EPO Pub. No.: WO 02/07840, hereinafter Wu), and further in view of DuVal (U.S. Patent No.: U.S. 5,818,836).**

For claim 3, Matsuda and Parry disclose the modified community providing server as defined in claim 2.

However, Matsuda and Parry do not explicitly disclose, wherein, when a fifth user who has not logged into the virtual community accesses the website mounting the virtual tag community, the fifth user is not in a logged-in state in the virtual tag community, the control means performs control to show a specific character.

Wu explicitly discloses wherein, when a fifth user who has not logged into the virtual community accesses the website mounting the virtual tag community, the fifth user is not in a logged-in state in the virtual tag community, the control means performs control to show a character (Wu: page 11, lines 17-24, "In addition, **online and offline presence indicators**, which identify the user's status, have found wide application and appeal in Instant Messenger networks. As a mobile phone number corresponds to Instant Messenger ID, in the present invention, an Instant

Messenger ID can be used to show the online or offline status of the mobile phone, so as to introduce the status concept into the field of mobile instant messaging. Binding a mobile phone number and an Instant Messenger ID, and displaying a mobile phone status are both aspects of the present invention, featuring information exchange without disclosing the mobile phone number."

Where "show a character" is read on "online and offline presence indicator", page 17, lines 1-19, "After the status query using the above method, the screen indicates of whether the targeted clients are online. In one embodiment, the online status may be represented by a special character. As shown in screen shot 1401, clients 10082 and 10138 are online, indicated by a special character, such as "*" here, while the client 10083 is offline. Other indicators or indicating methods may be employed. Screen shot 1402 is a corresponding status display on a PC client. The online status of a mobile client may be indicated, for example, by either the color, brightness or some other visual differentiation of the icon, such as icon 1403, which indicate the mobile client 10082 is online. On the other hand, the offline client 1404 is dim, which indicates the mobile client 10083 is offline. It is useful to note that a user of the PC client knows whether the clients 10082 and 10083 are mobile clients, based on the icons representing them (e.g., the icon comprises an image of a mobile

phone). In another embodiment, the icon may be customized to include other icons that sufficiently represent their characteristics of the corresponding clients. For example, the icon representing a wireless personal digital assistant (PDA) may comprise a symbol of a Palm device. The instant messenger users may not care whether the other "buddies" are utilizing mobile clients or PC clients, and may only want to be able to communicate with them through instant messenger network. In a further embodiment, the status display may not show whether the clients are mobile or PC clients, such as screen shot 1401.").

It would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to improve upon "Information processing apparatus, information processing method, service providing system, and computer program thereof" as taught by Matsuda by implementing "Instant messaging system and method" as taught by Wu, because it would provide Matsuda's modified method with the enhanced capability of notifying the user the status of other users.

However, Matsuda, Parry and Wu do not explicitly disclose the control means performs control to show a specific character.

DuVal discloses the control means performs control to show a specific character (DuVal: column 9, lines 4-7, "...includes an icon 108 for initiating an anonymous voice call").

It would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to improve upon "Information processing apparatus, information processing method, service providing system, and computer program thereof" as taught by Matsuda by implementing "Method and apparatus for anonymous voice communication using an online data service" as taught by DuVal, because it would provide Matsuda's modified method with the enhanced capability of notifying the user the status of other users.

14. **Claim 4 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Matsuda (U.S. Pub. No.: US 2002/0054094 A1), in view of Parry (U.S. Pub. No.: U.S. 2002/0178186) as applied to claim 1 above, and further in view of Olivier (U.S. Patent No.: US 6,480,885 B1).**

For claim 4, Matsuda and Parry disclose the modified community providing server as defined in claim 1, wherein,

the user management information database stores an address of the website of the third user owning the website mounting the virtual tag community among the registered users, and the control means provides information of the address of the website for a fourth user via the virtual tag community (Olivier: column 14, lines 29-33, "This may include email addresses, geographical data such as a graphical map indicating locations of other users.").

It would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to improve upon "Information processing apparatus, information processing method, service providing system, and computer program thereof" as taught by Matsuda by implementing "Dynamically matching users for group communications based on a threshold degree of matching of sender and recipient predetermined acceptance criteria" as taught by Olivier, because it would provide Matsuda's modified method with the enhanced capability of "give the subscribing user feedback at subscription time on the identities and/or other info about what subscribers he has been matched up with" (Olivier: column 14, lines 26-29).

For claim 11, Matsuda and Parry disclose modified the virtual community system according to claim 7, wherein the user terminal is a first user terminal used by the first user to access the virtual tag community mounted on the website used by the registered second user, and the virtual community system further comprises at least one second user terminal connected to the virtual community providing server, the first user terminal and the user website server via the network, wherein the registered second user uses the second user terminal to access the virtual tag community mounted on the website used by the registered second user (Parry: page 2, paragraph [0024], paragraph [0025]).

For claim 12, Matsuda and Parry disclose modified the virtual community system according to claim 11, wherein the first user accesses the virtual tag community mounted on the website used by the registered second user without having to access another website to use content of the virtual community (Parry: page 2, paragraph [0024], paragraph [0025])**.**

Conclusion

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to YU ZHAO whose telephone number is (571)270-3427. The examiner can normally be reached on Monday-Friday 7:30am-5:00pm EST.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Tony Mahmoudi can be reached on (571) 272-4078. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 571-270-4427.

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see http://pair-direct.uspto.gov. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free). If you would like assistance from a USPTO Customer Service Representative or access to the automated information system, call 800-786-9199 (IN USA OR CANADA) or 571-272-1000.

Date: 12/16/2009

/Yu Zhao/

Examiner, Art Unit 2169

/Yicun Wu/

Primary Examiner, Art Unit 2158